

VZCZCXRO7896

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RUEHLZ RUEHNP RUEHPOD RUEHROV RUEHSK RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHMO #3778/01 3661257  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 311257Z DEC 08  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1405  
INFO RUEHDX/MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 003778

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [KNNP](#) [OREP](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: KOSACHEV MEETS CODEL TAUSCHER: MORE DIALOGUE NEEDED

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Duma International Relations Committee Chair Konstantin Kosachev told CODEL Tauscher on December 16 that parliamentary dialogue between the U.S. and Russia needed to be revitalized. He suggested that the Duma International Relations and Defense Committees should meet with the House of Representatives' Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees in a "Parliamentary 2 Plus 2" format. He said the U.S. and Russia should cooperate more on short- and medium-range missile defense (MD), and argued that deploying MD systems in Poland and the Czech Republic would not alter the balance of power in Europe, but would erode trust between the U.S. and Russia. He also suggested parliamentarians in the U.S., Russia, Poland, and the Czech Republic should meet to discuss MD. Kosachev noted the GOR could support sanctions to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, but the IAEA should conduct inspections first. According to Kosachev, NATO enlargement did not threaten Russian security, but did cause problems in other areas such as Afghanistan. He also indicated the START Treaty would not be extended, and U.S. proposals for cutting nuclear forces would leave Russia at a strategic disadvantage. The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty could not be salvaged as long as it was linked to the Istanbul Commitments because Abkhazia and South Ossetia were now independent countries. End Summary.

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The Parliamentary 2 Plus 2  
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¶2. (SBU) In a December 16 meeting with Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-CA), Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA), Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO), staff members, and the DCM, Duma International Relations Committee Chair Konstantin Kosachev argued that parliamentary dialogue between Russia and the U.S. was not going well. He said the U.S. and Russian parliamentarians should consult more, and suggested that the Duma International Relations and Defense Committees should meet with the House of Representatives' Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. This "Parliamentary 2 Plus 2" could discuss a wide range of issues that affect the U.S. and Russia, and in the process build much-needed trust. Kosachev added that there was much press interest in CODEL Tauscher's visit because it was "so unusual for our parliamentarians to meet." He said he hoped one day it would be a normal occurrence.

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Need To Cooperate On Missile Defense  
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¶3. (SBU) Calling MD a "unique issue in U.S.-Russian relations," Kosachev said the U.S. and Russia should cooperate to build a joint MD system to counter short- and medium-range missiles. This cooperation could take place only if the U.S. did not move forward on its plans for long-range missile defense.

¶4. (SBU) Kosachev conceded that placing ten interceptor missiles in Poland will not alter the balance of power in Europe. He argued that it does, however, erode trust and confidence between the U.S. and Russia. He rejected arguments that proposed MD sites in Poland

and the Czech Republic do not pose a threat to Russian security, as Iranian missiles can reach only the Black Sea and therefore do not yet pose a threat to the United States. "The U.S. makes up threats and then counters them," he argued. He also expressed GOR concerns that the U.S. plans to develop a world-wide MD system to neutralize Russia's nuclear arsenal.

15. (SBU) Kosachev criticized the U.S. approach to MD as not transparent. He complained that the U.S. told Russia to talk to Poland and the Czech Republic regarding access to inspect MD sites. He also urged parliamentarians from Russia, the U.S., Poland, and the Czech Republic to hold MD discussions.

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Iran: Sanctions Not Yet The Answer  
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16. (SBU) Kosachev argued that the GOR could, in theory, support using a harsh sanctions regime to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, "but we are not there yet." He said the IAEA must conduct inspections in Iran before the UN Security Council should consider sanctions on Iran. In any event, he added, sanctions often prove ineffective.

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Russia Not Threatened By NATO Enlargement  
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17. (SBU) Kosachev posited that Russia does not feel threatened by NATO enlargement. He said the GOR does not wish to rid Europe of NATO or U.S. soldiers. NATO's enlargement does, however, pose problems in places like Afghanistan, he argued. Kosachev complained that, because Afghan stabilization is a NATO project, Russia does

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not effectively participate.

18. (SBU) Kosachev said that NATO is a "comfortable" forum for the U.S., but it is not comfortable for Russia. He said that the NATO does not take Russia's concerns seriously, and that is why Putin's February 10, 2007, Munich speech was so harsh. Kosachev said that Putin told former Bavarian Minister-President Edmund Stoiber the only way to get the West to listen to Russia was to use such tough language.

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Plans For Life After START  
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19. (SBU) Kosachev told CODEL Tauscher that the START Treaty would not be extended; this, he said, had been agreed to at the November Joint Compliance and Inspection Commission meeting in Geneva. He expressed GOR concerns that U.S. proposals for cutting nuclear arsenals would leave Russia at a strategic disadvantage. "Strategic forces must be cut in a fair way," he argued.

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The Conventional Forces In Europe Treaty  
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110. (SBU) Kosachev expressed his doubts that an agreement could be reached on the CFE Treaty. He said, "CFE is ruined, and I doubt anyone in Russia or the U.S. cares." He said linking CFE with the Istanbul Commitments was simply not practical, as "the situation in Georgia has changed" and Abkhazia and South Ossetia were now independent. He expressed hope, however, that a solution in Moldova could be found.

111. (U) The delegation did not clear this message.

BEYRLE